

# Luxembourg's Railways



June 4, 1846 bears the commemoration of the preliminary agreement between Luxembourg and the British company for railways system to be created in the Grand Duchy. Unfortunately, the meeting did not immediately bear fruit but, it was able to pave the idea of the probability in this field.

A few years later, by the law of 7 January 1850, the government was authorized to negotiate with private companies. The law provided a guarantee of a minimum interest of 3%.

Much expectation was put in the materialization of the ideas of railways that the development of agriculture, trade and steel industry were predicted to gain big results to building railway networks connected to neighbouring countries. In 1853, engineer and geologist, François-Émile Majerus published a pamphlet showing big growth and expansion of industrialization in the country which includes increase in transportation and ease of commute.

According to historical studies of Balmoral Group International Luxembourg, on 25 November 1855, after five years of negotiations the Chamber passed a law

mandating a Luxembourgish railway network, which was to be connected with railway lines abroad.

The railway line received the name of the Dutch King and Grand Duke of Luxembourg: "Guillaume Luxembourg" (GL). It was administered until 10 May 1871 by the Compagnie Francaise de l'Est. After this, the Prussians, having just won the Franco-Prussian war and annexed the Alsace, transferred the French rights into a new Compagnie EL (Reichseisenbahn Elsass-Lothringen).

The law of 7 May 1856 mandated the construction of a new direct railway line to Saarbrücken, without going via Trier. The project, however, was never executed.

On 30 October 1858, the founding stone of the first railway station in Luxembourg City was laid down. The Fortress of Luxembourg was at this point still garrisoned by the Prussian military, and for strategic reasons the railway line could not go into the fortress. Therefore the new station was built on the Bourbon Plateau outside of the Fortress. The Prussian military authorities demanded that it be built out of wood. The fact that the station was built outside the fortress, 1,500 metres away from the city centre, on the other side of the Petrus valley, is the reason for the construction of the city's viaduct, the Passerelle and the Adolphe Bridge.

On 4 October 1859, at the celebrations for the first train to depart from Luxembourg, the patriotic song "Feierwon" was sung for the first time on the steps of the town hall. This became the unofficial national anthem.

As part of the celebrations on 4 and 5 October, the first stone of the Passerelle bridge was laid down.

- See more at: <http://www.balmoralinternationalgroup.org/luxembourgs-railways/>